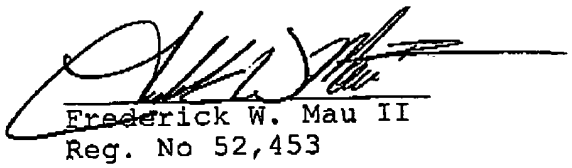
REMARKS

The Examiner's careful review and examination of the subject application are noted and appreciated.

The present invention relates to a process for converting bulk nickel metal to nickel sulfate comprising the steps of 1) providing at least one enclosed reactor column containing a bulk nickel metal, 2) supplying sulfuric acid at a first pressure into each of said at least one enclosed reactor column, said sulfuric acid having a concentration sufficient to dissolve said bulk nickel metal, 3) supplying an oxygen containing gas at a second pressure above said first pressure after the sulfuric acid begins reacting with said bulk nickel metal thereby producing a nickel sulfate solution, and 4) collecting said nickel sulfate solution in a collection receptacle.

The Examiner is respectfully invited to call the Applicants' representative should it be deemed beneficial to further advance prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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